

--ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A material for absorbing hydrophobic water-immiscible liquids comprises lignocellulosic plant material which has been rendered relatively more absorbent to hydrophobic water-immiscible liquids by esterification of hydroxyl groups in the lignin of the lignocellulose material. The esterification in one aspect is by acetylation of the hydroxyl groups. Absorbing articles and methods for use with hydrophobic water-immiscible liquids are also disclosed.--

IN THE CLAIMS

Please cancel claims 2, 7, 18 and 23.

Please amend the following claims:

1. (Amended) A method of absorbing hydrophobic water-immiscible liquids comprising treating the liquid with lignocellulosic [cellulosic] plant material which has been modified to render it relatively more absorbent to hydrophobic water-immiscible liquids by esterification [chemical reaction] of hydroxyl groups in the lignin of the lignocellulose material.

Please amend claim 3 to depend on claim 1.

Please amend claim 5 to depend on claim 1.

In claim 10, line 4, please delete the following: ", cotton".